

1st SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST- Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste
March 9 2025

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Schedule of Divine Services

Saturday, March 8 **5:00 PM +Janet Ducar by Bernard E. Ducar**
Sunday, March 9 **9:00 AM Special Birthday Intentions of Mary Ann Sciomacco**
 by Helen Dragos

Pages for Sunday’s Divine Liturgy: Tone 1 pages 125 – 126 & pages 220 - 222

Web Liturgy for Week of March 9 sponsored by
Ruth Cavanagh

Sanctuary Candle is lit from March 9 – March 22
Special Intentions of John & Joanne Organiscak
by Nicholas & Lorraine Havrilla & Family

Wednesday, March 12 6:30 PM Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts

Friday, March 14 6:30 PM Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts
2nd All Souls Remembrance

2nd SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Saturday, March 15 **5:00 PM +Anna Kostrej by Magdalene Semego**
Sunday, March 16 **9:00 AM +Margaret Kostovny & +Catherine Jacobs**
 by Dolores Zoretich

OUR RETURN TO THE LORD FOR ALL HE HAS GIVEN ME:

Regular Offertory	\$3,250.00
Maintenance Fund	1,150.00
Holy Day	65.00
BCW	42.00
Candles	57.75
Loose Cash	105.00
TOTAL	\$4,669.75

Special Donations – In memory of Elsie Urban: \$50 by Agnes Borsh; \$200 by Ernie & Mary Ann Varhola; Special Donations: \$500 by Christine Cafeo; \$250 in memory of +Leonard Stagon by Family

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND SHUT-INS

AT HOME: Margie Seman, Teri Phares, Raymond Petro, Jr., Luke Pasternak, Marissa Stout, Tara Seman, Patrick Singer, Mary Ann Urban, Carole Srsic, Pauline Johnson, Aaron Spang, Suzie (Wargo) Bodziach, Patty Schneider, Jeannie Pasternak, Janet Myers, Ethel Wahal, Paul Cherep, Andrew & Linda Deskevich, William Sabo, Nick & Marion Mamula, Gus Matta, Barbara Sowko, Fr. Simeon

Italicized names indicate Parish Shut-ins. Other names are submitted prayer requests.

NURSING HOMES/REHABILITATION CENTERS/ASSISTED LIVING

Betty Martin

MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK

- 10 Magdalene Semego
- 12 David Banks
- 13 Amy Myers
- 15 Carol Lawson

In person Attendance: *Saturday, March 1: 53; Sunday, March 2: 78*

Forgiveness Vespers: 25

Monday Pre-Sanctified Gifts: 35

Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Gifts: 33

Live Stream Viewing: *Saturday, March 1: 32; Sunday, March 2: 66*

Forgiveness Vespers: 20

Monday Pre-Sanctified Gifts: 23

Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Gifts: 26

MANY YEARS

Our Parish Family extends its prayerful best wishes to **Adelaide Mae Hilzendeger**, who received the Mysteries of Initiation on Sunday, March 2, 2025. In addition we welcome the entire Hilzendeger family, who canonically became Byzantine Catholic. We extend our prayerful best wishes to **Michael, Karen, Madelyn and Kilian** who received the Mystery of Christmation. *May God grant to the Hilzendeger family peace, health and happiness for many years!*

KOLACHE AND PASKA ORDERS

We are now taking orders for Easter kolache and paskas. Order sheets are located in the vestibules. **DEADLINE FOR EASTER ORDERS IS MARCH 16, 2025.**

SARRIS EASTER CANDY ORDERS

Order forms for Sarris Candy are located in the vestibules of the church. If you would like to order candy for Easter, please return by **March 16, 2025**.

CHOCOLATE BYZANTINE CROSSES

Our Parish is selling Sarris' chocolate Byzantine Cross for Pascha. They will be available on Palm Sunday weekend. Orders need to be prepaid and envelopes are available in the vestibules of the church. **Deadline to order is March 16, 2025.**

"CATHEDRAL KITCHEN"

The "Kathedral Kitchen" has been restocked. We have quarts of *Halushki, Chili & Wedding, Chicken Noodle, Wedding, Chicken Gnocchi, Mushroom, Pasta Fagioli, Stuffed Cabbage, Tomato Basil, Stuffed Pepper soups* for \$7; Stuffed Cabbage: ½ dozen for \$18 and 1 dozen for \$30. If you would like to buy any please see Patty Bovee, Diane Pochron or Fr. Andrew.

RUMMAGE SALE ITEMS

We will be holding another Rummage Sale on May 30 & 31, 2025. Please put aside any items you no longer want or need for our rummage sale.

As in the past, we cannot accept TV's, computers, shoes and clothes. Small boxes may be left in the church vestibules. Please consider also helping to mark and sell the items in May/June. Thanks for your donations.

EASTER KOLBASI SALE

Saints Peter & Paul, Duquesne parish Men's Club is once again selling kolbasi. Cost is **\$7/lb.** Sign-up sheets are at the entrances. **Please order by March 30, 2025 DELIVERY IS PALM SUNDAY.APRIL 13, 2025.** Thank you.

GIFT CARDS AND LOTTERY TICKETS

If anyone is able to donate gift cards or lottery tickets for our raffle tree at the Spring Craft Show, please put them in an envelope in the collection basket and mark it "Lottery Tree." Thank you in advance for any help you may be able to give.

PUSSYWILLOWS NEEDED

Even though we are still very much in the midst of winter, I thought I would place this reminder now for when the weather turns warmer (hopefully soon!). When the weather turns better and the tree begin to bud, please cut them when they bud (before they turn yellow), and bring them to church. We will store them here until Palm Sunday. **Do not put them in water.**

SUPER SATURDAY FLEA MARKET

St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church, 2336 Brownsville Road, Carrick. Saturday, April, 5 2025, 9AM-2PM. Come find new treasures in our old treasures! Or sell your unwanted items. Cost per table: \$20 for 1, \$35 for 2, \$50 for 3. Call the church 412-881-8344 to reserve a space.



Attentive to the Word

*First Sunday of the Great Fast
Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste*

Hebrews 11: 24-26, 32- 12:2

John 1:43-51

HOLY FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

In the year 313 Saint Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognizing Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was a pagan, and he decided to stamp out Christianity in his part of the Empire. As Licinius prepared his army to fight Constantine, he decided to remove Christians from his army, fearing mutiny.

One of the military commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebaste was Agricola, a zealous champion of idolatry. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocians, brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in many battles. When these Christian soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricola locked them up in prison. The soldiers occupied themselves with prayer and psalmody, and during the night they heard a voice saying, "Persevere until the end, then you shall be saved."

On the following morning, the soldiers were again taken to Agricola. This time the pagan tried flattery. He began to praise their valor, their youth and strength, and once more he urged them to renounce Christ and thereby win themselves the respect and favor of their emperor.

Seven days later, the renowned judge Licius arrived at Sebaste and put the soldiers on trial. The saints steadfastly answered, "Take not only our military insignia, but also our lives, since nothing is more precious to us than Christ God." Licius then ordered his servants to stone the holy martyrs. But the stones missed the saints and returned to strike those who had thrown them. One stone thrown by Licius hit Agricola in the face, smashing his teeth. The torturers realized that the saints were guarded by some invisible power. In prison, the soldiers spent the night in prayer and again they heard the voice of the Lord comforting them: "He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live (John 11:25). Be brave and fear not, for you shall obtain imperishable crowns."

On the following day the judge repeated the interrogation in front of the torturer, but the soldiers remained unyielding. It was winter, and there was a severe frost. They lined up the holy soldiers, threw them into a lake near the city, and set a guard to prevent them from coming out of the water. In order to break the will of the martyrs, a warm bath-house was set up on the shore. During the first hour of the night, when the cold had become unbearable, one of the soldiers made a dash for the bath-house, but no sooner had he stepped over the threshold, then he fell down dead.

During the third hour of the night, the Lord sent consolation to the martyrs. Suddenly there was light, the ice melted away, and the water in the lake became warm. All the guards were asleep, except for Aglaius, who was keeping watch. Looking at the lake he saw that a radiant crown had appeared over the head of each martyr. Aglaius counted thirty-nine crowns and realized that the soldier who fled had lost his crown.

Aglaius then woke up the other guards, took off his uniform and said to them, "I too am a Christian," and he joined the martyrs. Standing in the water he prayed, "Lord God, I believe in You, in Whom these soldiers believe. Add me to their number, and make me worthy to suffer with Your servants." Then a fortieth crown appeared over his head.

In the morning, the torturers saw with surprise that the martyrs were still alive, and their guard Aglaius was glorifying Christ together with them. They led the soldiers out of the water and broke their legs. During this horrible execution the mother of the youngest of the soldiers, Meliton, pleaded with her son to persevere until death.

They put the bodies of the martyrs on a cart and committed them to fire. Young Meliton was still breathing, and they left him on the ground. His mother then picked up her son, and on her own shoulders she carried him behind the cart. When Meliton drew his last breath, his mother put him on the cart with the bodies of his fellow sufferers. The bodies of the saints were tossed in the fire, and their charred bones were thrown into the water, so that Christians would not gather them up.

Three days later the martyrs appeared in a dream to Saint Peter, Bishop of Sebaste, and commanded him to bury their remains. The bishop together with several clergy gathered up the relics of the glorious martyrs by night and buried them with honor.

From OCA website

GREAT FAST VESPERS

The parishes of the Pittsburgh Protoperbyteral District will celebrate the Great Fast Vespers on the Sundays of the Great Fast this year at the following Churches:

March 9	St. John the Baptist Cathedral	Fr. David Bosnich
March 16	Ss. Peter & Paul, Tarentum	Fr. Radko Blichar
March 23	St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair	Fr. Tyler Wisniewski
March 30	Ss. Peter & Paul, Duquesne	Fr. Frank Firko
April 6	St. Andrew the Apostle, Gibsonia	Fr. Michael Kunitz

You will have the opportunity to celebrate the Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. and the Vespers at 4:00 p.m. After the Vespers we will gather in the Social Hall of the church for a Lenten Soup, Bread and Beverage.

Mission Statement

Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral is a member of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh who through the Holy Spirit is called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a community and family, we grow in faith and in the image and likeness of God by dedicating ourselves to welcoming, celebrating and caring for all of God's people.

Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism, Chrismation & Eucharist): Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish family. Pre-baptism instructions are required. Contact Fr. Andrew to schedule.

Mystery of Crowning: Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish family. Must meet with Fr. Andrew before setting date and reserving your banquet hall. Pre-Cana program is required and three sessions with Fr. Andrew. The ceremony will be celebrated according to the prescription of the liturgical book of the Byzantine rite.

Mystery of Reconciliation: Celebrated Saturdays, 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM and upon request.

Mystery of Anointing: Celebrated upon request. Ideally celebrated in Church the Sunday before undergoing any surgical or other medical procedure.

Visitation of the Sick: The parishioners confined to their homes or nursing homes due to health reasons are visited monthly. Also, persons who are hospitalized are visited when Fr. Andrew is notified. It especially is important that a family member contact Fr. Andrew whenever a loved-one is hospitalized.

Funerals: Families of the deceased or the funeral director must contact Fr. Andrew before setting and publishing the day and time of the funeral.

Parish Membership: We welcome anyone to become a parishioner of St. John the Baptist Cathedral Parish. Only those who are registered are considered members of the Parish. When one registers to become a parish member they assume the responsibility of rendering stewardship of time, talent and treasure to this parish family. Worship at this parish is always expected. Registration is done only through the pastor by appointment. The Parish Office should be notified as soon as possible of any change of address within the Parish as well as one's leaving.

Godparent/Sponsor Letters: Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish.

Rectory Office Hours: Judy is in the parish office Monday – Friday from 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM. Father Andrew is available on other days and times by appointment.